REMARKS

The Office rejects claims 1-4, 13-16 and 20 in the subject application. Claims 1-28 (3 independent claims; 25 total claims) remain pending in the application. In view of the following remarks, reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-4, and 13-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Mizuta, U.S. Patent No. 6,170,116 ("Mizuta"). The Examiner contends that Mizuta discloses "a support structure having a surface; and a pad formed on the surface of the support structure, wherein the pad comprises an adhesive 3 and a plurality of abrasive particles 14 in contact with the adhesive." Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Mizuta generally discloses a probe tip cleaning device made of fibers which are interwoven and melted to each other where they cross each other and where the mesh of fibers is connected to a support structure. See Mizuta column 3, lines 49-57. Specifically, the fibers must consist of one of the following materials: metal fibers, carbon fibers, and/or ceramic fibers. See column 5, lines 7-16. The probe tip cleaning device of Mizuta functions by the fibers scraping off particles from the probe tip.

Mizuta further discloses a prior art probe tip cleaning device that employs abrasive grains in a silicon rubber matrix. Mizuta teaches away from the use of such a device. In fact, Mizuta thoroughly disparages the use of a silicon rubber matrix due to what Mizuta describes as the problems of the silicon rubber adhering to the probe tip. See column 2, lines 20-26. Mizuta's solution to the silicon rubber matrix "problem" is to completely eliminate the matrix filler through use of fibers that are sintered to each other. See column 6, lines 3-15. Thus, Mizuta teaches away from the use of particles suspended in a matrix.

Furthermore, Mizuta only discloses an adhesive in the context of attaching the overall fiber matrix to a support structure. See column 10, lines 14-15. In addition, the Office Action

incorrectly states that element number 14 of Figure 7 represents abrasive particles. In fact, element 14, as best understood, comprises a "hard layer" formed on a surface of stainless steel fiber by injecting nitrogen or carbon into the surface of the stainless steel fiber. See column 11, lines 9-13.

In contrast, Applicants' claim 1 recites, in part, "a pad formed on said surface of said support structure, wherein said pad comprises an adhesive and a plurality of abrasive particles in contact with said adhesive." (Emphasis added.) Applicants note that Mizuta does not disclose a plurality of abrasive particles in contact with the adhesive. For the above reasons, Applicants submit that each and every element of independent claim 1 is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Mizuta. Accordingly, claim 1 (and claims 2-14 which variously depend from claim 1) is not anticipated by Mizuta and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

For similar reasons, independent claim 15 (and claims 16-19 which variously depend from claim 15) is not anticipated by Mizuta. Moreover, claim 15 recites, in part, a multi-layered adhesive and abrasive particle pad. Mizuta does not disclose an abrasive particle pad with multiple layers of adhesive and abrasive. Applicants therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Maeda et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,306,187 ("Maeda"). The Examiner contends that Maeda discloses the steps of making a pad by applying an adhesive to a support structure and applying a plurality of abrasive particles to that adhesive layer to form an abrasive particle layer. Applicants respectfully traverses the rejection. The Maeda patent generally discloses a form of sandpaper on a double stick foam backing. Specifically, Maeda discloses applying abrasive grains in a layer to a substrate with a polyester resin to hold the abrasive grains to the substrate. See column 3, lines 12-21 and column 4, lines 8-22. As best understood, reference number 5 of Figure 2 represents abrasive grains, 7 is the resin matrix holding the abrasive grains, and 1 is the substrate to which the abrasive grain layer is attached by the resin.

In contrast, Applicants' claim 20 recites, in part, the steps of "applying an adhesive layer to a support structure, and applying a plurality of abrasive particles to said adhesive layer to form an abrasive particle layer." Thus, Maeda does not disclose the use of an adhesive nor the application of abrasive particles to the adhesive.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 5-12, 17-19 and 21-25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims 1-25 are allowable over the cited prior art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (602) 382-6367 at the Examiner's convenience, if that would help further prosecution of the subject Application. Applicants authorize and respectfully request that any fees due be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-2814. **This statement does NOT authorize charge of the issue fee.**

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____
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